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Ruth Berman

"Victorian dragons: the reluctant brood

The dragon, so popular in modern fantasy, was rare in nineteenth-century writing. Indeed, few unnatural animals of any kind were to be found there. The fantasy beings that populated Victorian tales were overwhelmingly humanoid – ghosts, *Doppelgangers* {umlauted a}, mer-folk, fairies, witches, or magicians. Even when dragons became popular in nineteenth-century illustration, they were not yet popular in writing, and did not become so until the end of the century. Fantasy beings of all sorts, including dragons, had been absent from most eighteenth-century writing. Samuel Johnson in his "Preface to Shakespeare" condemned "adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments" as proper only to primitive and plebian tastes. In the nineteenth-century prose wonder tales, the adventures, giants, and enchantments returned, but not the dragons.

Dragons were probably avoided because the idea of the dragon had acquired a specific religious and allegorical meaning, too obvious for subtle characterization, and too specifically Christian for use in secular tales. Secular literature demanded secular figures. Even when the underlying meanings were Christian, as in the tales of George MacDonald, the surface mythology was not. He used characters common in folklore: fairy godmothers and nature spirits rather than angels as supernatural guardians and wicked witches, fairies, goblins, and giants rather than demons as supernatural tempters. (*Lilith*, his last fantasy, with the opposition of Lilith and Adam, was the only one to make use of supernatural figures overtly Judeo-Christian.) The dragon, unlike such folklore-based figures as fairies, with their potential for both good and evil, had become rigidly fixed

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with a single, overtly religious meaning. It was the dragon of Milton, Spenser, and the book of Revelations: it was Satan and absolutely evil. This view of the dragon as evil goes back to antiquity, and the best known dragons of ancient myth reinforced the idea of the dragon as simply and utterly evil.

But this stereotype of the dragon as evil distorted the animal's mythic nature. As Joseph L. Fontenrose shows in his *Python*, the dragon is an ambivalent creature. Hero and dragon change places easily, and the dragon has its kindly side:

> The Chinese dragons are in general benevolent and beneficient deities, who send rain and bring good crops. They also bring thunderstorms, tempests, whirlwinds, and floods. Like Zeus or Baal, they bring both good and bad weather; for the god, we should not forget, can send both good and evil upon mortal man. And at this point we should also realise that dragons and snakes did not have a uniformly bad reputation in Greece and the Near East. Greece too had its benevolent reptilian deities: snakes that were spirits of springs, *genii loci*, embodiments or attributes of gods, e.g., Asklepios, Athena, Apollo … Zeus himself.

[side-note: Joseph L. Fontenrose, *Python, A Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins*, pp. 401-492]

(The interchangeability of hero and dragon is further discussed in pp. 469-474 of this work.) The dragon's strength made the red dragon the symbol of Wales and Arthur's Britain. Despite the popular image of knights as dragonslayers, only a few of the knights of legend hunted dragons. (The popular image is based

on St. George, whose legend predated knighthood.) King Arthur, Pendragon though he may be, rarely met dragons, aside from some allegorical visions of dragons (e.g., Arthur's Dream in Malory, or the dragons interpreted by Merlin in Geoffrey of Monmouth), and only a few of his more distant knights actually slew any (e.g., Tristram or Libeaus Deaconus). Dragons may be fierce and protective, but these attributes are not in themselves evil. As guardians they could exemplify the virtue of faithfulness. (1) Though the guardian dragon is generally shown as an obstacle to be defeated by a hero (as with Jason and the golden Fleece, or Hercules and the Golden Apples of the Hesperides), the guardian is not evil in itself, as, for example, the gold-hoarding dragon of *Beowulf* is.

In the nineteenth century, fantasy writers who wanted to write of evil turned to humans for their symbols. There was ample precedent for humanoid villains who feature as title characters in the 210 stories of *The Com-*

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plete Grimm's Fairy Tales; there are dwarfs, devils, nixies, witches, giants, a group of elves, and a gnome, but no dragons (although there is one griffin). Dragons appear incidentally in a few of the stories in the collection: maiden-eating dragons in "The Two Brothers" and "The Four Skillful Brothers," dragons holding maidens captive in "The Gnome," a dragon-woman in "The Singing, Soaring Lark," and the devil in dragon's shape in "The Devil and his Grandmother." Similarly, although Katharine M. Briggs, in her *Encyclopedia of Fairies*, couples giants and dragons as the chief monster in British fairy lore, her entry on giants is twice as long as that on dragons, with ten giants notable enough to mention by name, as opposed to only four dragons.

[side-note: Katharine M. Briggs, *Encyclopedia of Fairies*]

Nineteenth-century fantasy writers interested in writing about evil for the most part used humans or humanoids to embody it: for example, the Ash, a tree-spirit in human form, and the hero's own shadow in MacDonald's *Phantastes*; Mary Shelley's Frankenstein's Monster; the children Want and Misery in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*; Stevenson's Mr. Hyde; or such humanoid devils as Goethe's Mephistopheles, Hogg's Brownie of the Black Haggs, or the demon of Thackeray's "The Devil's Wager." In one of the rare uses of an evil dragon in nineteenth-century fiction, Mark Twain managed to include a dragon to be killed in one of the mock German legends in *A Tramp Abroad* (1879).

[side-note: Mark Twain, *A Tramp Abroad* (1879)]

The chapter "Why Germans Wear Spectacles" is a brief account of how the despised Sir Wissenschaft defeats a dragon with a fire extinguisher. But when Twain wanted to explore medievalism defeated by technology more profoundly, he put the Connecticut Yankee into King Arthur's court (1889), without dragons. Several nineteenth-century writers used the figure of the dragon-woman, both in prose and poetry, but most of them (William Morris; poem, "The Lady of the Lake" excepted) identified her as a snake-woman, rather than a dragon: Geraldine in Coleridge's "Christabel" has a "reptile soul," Keats' "Lamia" dies when identified by the rationalist as a serpent, and Oliver Wendell Holmes' *Elsie Venner* is a rattlesnake-woman. Even Lewis Carroll's gentle Alice is identified by the Pigeon as a serpent. By contrast, early in the twentieth century, Bram Stoker referred to his white worm as both a dragon and a snake in *The Lair of the White Worm* (1911). This is a poor novel, but with an ingenious use of the dragon-woman figure as a surviving dinosaur of ancient, reptilian evil.

The nineteenth-century reptilian monsters thus tended to be ambivalent, when derived from the dragon-woman figure, rather than evil.

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(As noted above, however, most of the writers still avoided the term "dragon," and identified such characters as snakes.) Some reptilian monsters were positively good. Goethe's snake learns self-sacrifice in "The Tale"; Novalis' is a faithful guide when aided by wonder in Klingsohr's tale (in *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*); and E. T. A. Hoffmann's Salamander is an aristocrat in Atlantis, the country of poets, in "The Golden Pot." Even the creatures of evil were rarely absolutely evil: MacDonald's winged snake and its fellow monsters in *The Princess and Curdie* are humans who devolved into monsters through evil, but are capable of evolving into goodness again; Hawthorne's sub-title for the story of Roderick Elliston, "Egotism; or the Bosom Serpent," does not imply moral sin so much as psychological obsession.

Nineteenth-century fantasists shied away from actual dragons, even when they were using monsters, and even when the monsters were reptiles. Instead, they used original or little known creatures, such as, among the German romantics, Goethe's snake and Hoffmann's Salamander (with snake-daughters). Novalis, besides his snake-magnet, had a somewhat larger menagerie in Klingsohr's Tale, including a Sphinx and a Phoenix. Almost the only dragon to be found as a major character is Fafner, preserved as both dragon and giant in Wagner's Ring Cycle. Lewis Carroll invented the Jabberwock and the snark and paired his Mock turtle with a Gryphon. (The American, Frank R. Stockton, paired a Griffin with a Minor Canon. [(2]) Carroll referred only briefly to dragons, as in the elegant syllogism, "All Dragons are uncanny; All Scotchmen are canny," deriving the conclusion that no Dragons are Scotchmen,

[side-note: Lewis Carroll, *The Game of Logic*, p. 29]

or in the moralized extract from a Latin exercise book described in "Knot II. Eligible Apartments" of *A Tangled Tale*: 'The words 'Influence of Sympathy in United Action' … stood opposite to the anecdote 'Balbus was assisting his mother-in-law to convince the dragon'." The illustrator of *A Tangled Tale*, Arthur B. Frost, chose this single sentence for his drawing for the chapter (p. 5), even though it has nothing to do with the action of the *Tale*.

[side-note: Lewis Carroll, *A Tangled Tale*, p. 6]

George MacDonald's original monsters in *The Princess and Curdie* (1883) included a snake with tiny wings and legs, but no dragon as such. In contrast, when a twentieth-century writer, C. S. Lewis, used the same device of a sinning human turned into a monster and working his way back to humanity, in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Eustace was turned into a dragon. MacDonald included a dragon in *Phantastes*, but only briefly: in chapter 23 a paragraph is given to the description of the body of a dragon slain by the knight. Charles

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Illustration {Arthur B. Frost}:
'Balbus was assisting his mother-in-law to convince the dragon', from *A Tangled Tale*, by Lewis Carroll.]

Kingsley, in his poem *Andromeda* (1858) and his retelling of the story of Perseus in *The Heroes, or Greek Fairy Tales for My Children* (1856), did not refer to Andromeda's attacker as a dragon, but as a sea-beast or monster. His frontispiece to *The Heroes* shows the monster as a whale. In his retelling of the story of Jason in *The Heroes*, he described the guardian of the Golden Fleece (and drew it in his illustration) as a large serpent. Nathaniel Hawthorne was a little freer with dragons in his versions of Greek myths. He had dragons in "The Three Golden Apples" (*A Wonder Book*, 1852) and "The Golden Fleece" (*Tanglewood Tales*, 1853); but he had a sea-monster in 'The Gorgon's Head" (*A Wonder Book*) and a "serpent or

dragon" in "The Dragon's Teeth" (*Tanglewood Tales*). He did not include dragons in his original fantasy tales. Roderick Ellison, as noted above, was gnawed by a "Bosom Serpent."

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Andrew Lang, in *Prince Prigio* (1889), borrowed a Remora, a snake-like glacier creature, from Cyrano de Bergerac, to fight a Firedrake, which ought to be a dragon by its name, but is described as having hoofs and horns. It was not until after the turn of the century (in *Tales of a Fairy Court*, 1906) that Lang presented a dragon in his original fiction, and even then it was only one of the disguises of "The Magician Who Wanted More." As a student of folklore, Lang was well acquainted with dragons and included some in nearly every one of the volumes of *Fairy Books* he edited. His title for "The Devil and His Grandmother" was "The Dragon and His Grandmother" (in *The Yellow Fairy Book*). In the Preface to *The Green Fairy Book* (1892) he defended dragons against those who accused them of frightening the young reader:

> You who read the tales know very well how much is true and how much is only make-believe…. If there are frightful monsters in fairy tales, they do not frighten you now, because that kind of monster is no longer going about the world, whatever he may have done long, long ago. He has been turned into stone, and you may see his remains in museums. Therefore, I am not afraid that *you* will be afraid of the magicians and dragons.

All the same, Lang evidently did not feel free to introduce dragons in his own tales.

The discovery of dinosaurs brought a new interest in dragons; the existence of similar monsters in fact gave an extra plausibility to their supernatural counterparts, and the theory of evolution provided a convenient vocabulary for "explaining" the absence of dragons in modern times (or the presence of a rare modern dragon as a survivor from the ancient past). Stephen Prickett discusses the influence of dinosaurs in *Victorian Fantasies*. However, Prickett does not discuss the odd gap between the popularity of saurian dragons in art and in literature.

[side-note: Stephen Prickett, *Victorian Fantasies*, pp. 79-91]

His examples show saurian monsters first in the art illustrations of books of popular science, then in Tenniel's Jabberwock (1871), Doré's illustrations for *Paradise Lost* (1872), and Beardsley's Questing Beast (*Le Morte D'Arthur*, 1893/94), and he includes literary examples of other monsters influenced by the theory of evolution, as in Kingsley's *The Water Babies* (1863) and MacDonald's *The Princess and Curdie*. But his earliest example of the literary dragon is E. Nesbit's *The Book of Dragons* (1900). Perhaps artists, unlike writers, could give dragonlike characteristics to a monster such as the Jabberwock or the Questing Beast without calling up the religious ideas associated with the word "dragon." Further-

[p. 228
Illustration:
'Gorgonzola flies off on her dragon,' illustration by H. J. Ford, from *The Green Fairy Book*, Andrew Lang, ed. Courtesy of the University of Minnesota's Children's Literature Special Research Collections.]

more, the saurian dragon (such as Arthur B. Frost drew for *A Tangled Tale* was shorter and thicker than the serpentine dragons familiar from earlier paintings of St. George or the angel Michael slaying the dragon. The artist's image was therefore less likely than the writer's word to suggest Satan. Like Carroll's illustrators, those in Andrew Lang's collections were more dracophilic than their authors. In Lang's series of anthologies the artists sometimes chose one-sentence mentions of dragons to illustrate, as in H. J.

Ford's full-age drawing for "Heart of Ice," printed twice in *The Green Fairy Book*, both in its place with the story, and as the frontispiece; or the artist might draw dragons not in the text, as in Lancelot Speed's dragonlike depiction

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of the Norka (described only as a "beast," in "The Norka" in *The Red Fairy Book*).

But in order for writers to use the dragon as freely as artists to serve as a more flexible symbol, with the complexity of a Jabberwock or a Gryphon, the dragon's identification as Satanic had to be weakened. Kenneth Grahame accomplished this task in "The Reluctant Dragon" (in *Dream Days*, 1898) by turning the whole St. George story upside-down. In Grahame's version, the evil, maiden-eating dragon destined to be slain by the virtuous knight is a figment of the villagers' conventional imaginations. The Dragon is understandably reluctant to live up to any part of this role. St. George, complete with red-cross banner, is willing to live up to his part of the stereotype, but is much better pleased not to have to kill the Dragon. Dinosaurs gave Grahame an explanation for the dragon's existence that was plausible and secular, freeing the dragon from the religious meaning normally implied in a saint's adversary. This dragon remembers when more energetic dragons were getting killed off by knights for eating maidens, but he seems to be a dinosaur surviving from an earlier geologic era, preserved by an earthquake: "I suppose the earth sneezed, or shook itself, or the bottom dropped out of something. Anyhow, there was a shake and a roar and a general stramash, and I found myself miles away underground and wedged in as tight as tight." The Boy, who was an assiduous reader of fairy tales and natural history, sandwiched together, must have found this the dragon of his dreams, however reluctant a dragon it might be.

[side-note: Kenneth Grahame "The Reluctant Dragon," p. 165]

Peter Green, in discussing "The Reluctant Dragon," identifies the three main characters of dragon, knight, and child with aspects of Grahame himself, reconciled in the story and, for the time being, in Grahame's life. The Dragon, he argues, "is a living portrait of Grahame's anarchic, artistic, antisocial, irresponsible, indolent self."

[side-note: Peter Green, *Kenneth Grahame: A Biography*, p. 183]

Yet the dragon can also be read in another way, as a symbol of nature. He is, after all, a beast, however supernatural. His rescue from the villagers' bloodthirsty expectations includes with it the rescue of a badger, held by the villagers to be baited. The association of the supernatural beast with all natural beasts, touched on only lightly in this story, Grahame was to explore more deeply in *The Wind in the Willows*. In both *The Wind in the Willows* and "The Reluctant Dragon," the view of nature is, deliberately, incomplete and idyllic. This Rat and Badger are loving beasts, no danger to other animals; this Dragon is reluctant. The memory of what goes on in the Wild Wood beyond the Willows and what those more energetic dragons

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ate is pushed aside. Only the most delicate hints remind the reader of what is not being shown in this view of nature, as when the Saint disappoints the Boy's wish for a longer fight, remarking that the Dragon is getting too much pleasure out of being cheered for fighting: "he'll forget all about the arrangement and take to playing the fool, and there's no telling where he would stop."

[side-note: "The Reluctant Dragon," pp. 193-194]

By quietly ignoring the nature of beasts (especially energetic dragons) to be red in tooth and claw, which had so distressed Tennyson, Grahame was able to display their grace and beauty:

> A cloud of smoke obscured the mouth of the cave, and out of the midst of it the dragon himself, shining, sea-blue, magnificent, pranced splendidly forth; and everybody said "oo-oo-oo!" as if he had been a mighty rocket! His scales were glittering, his long spiky tail lashed his sides, his claws tore up the turf and sent it flying high over his back, and smoke and fire incessantly jetted from his angry nostrils. "Oh, well done, dragon!" cried the Boy, excitedly. "Didn't think he had it in him! He added to himself. (p. 190).

At about the same time as Grahame, other children's writers were experimenting with the uses of comic dragons. The two most notable results both appeared in 1990: E. Nesbit's *The Book of Dragons* in England, and L. Frank Baum's *A New Wonderland* in America, both making use of comic, though evil dragons. (3) Like Grahame, Nesbit and Baum played with color to make their dragons vivid. Nesbit's dragons in *The Book of Dragons* included a red one in "The Book of Beasts," a purple one in "Uncle James, or the Purple Stranger," green ones with yellow wings in "The Deliverers of their Country," and a Prussian-blue ice dragon in "The Dragon, or Do as You are Told." The *New Wonderland* dragon was purple, and Baum's later dragons included some bejeweled (*The Enchanted Island of Yew*, *The Tin Woodman of Oz*, *The Lost Princess of Oz*) and the sky-blue, silver-scaled Quox (in *Tik-Tok of Oz*). The heraldic arbitrariness of these color choices makes the dragons funnier. (4)

Like Grahame, Nesbit and Baum also parodied the St. George legend. Nesbit did so explicitly in two of the stories in *The Book of Dragons*. In "The Deliverers of their Country," the saint's statue refuses to fight a horde of dragons but gives two children some weather lore from his companion saint, Denis, so that they can kill the dragons on their own; and in "The Fairy Dragon," Sabrinetta, granddaughter of St. George and Princess Sabra, captures the dragon in an inherited dragon-proof bottle. The other stories in her collection, and Baum's

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New Wonderland, are implicit parodies, with the comedy turning in each case on the discovery of an ingenious and unheroic way of getting rid of dragons. For example, Nesbit's purple dragon is tied to a pillar by its long tail and is miniaturized by a quirk of evolution when it pulls loose and upsets the island's balance. Baum's purple dragon knots its own tail in a tug-of-war with the king, who is trying to extract its teeth; the tail turns out to be elastic and is pulled tight and cut up into fiddle-strings. In an earlier section of the book, "The Strange Adventures of the King's Head" (chapter 2), the king loses the fight entirely and has his head bitten off, producing a whimsical problem of identity as the king's body tries out substitute heads, and the dragon mischievously puts the head on another man's body.

The evil nature of these dragons is not taken seriously. As David L. Greene remarks in the "Introduction" to his collection of Baum's tales, "The Purple Dragon is not frightening but 'naughty'."

[side-note: L. Frank Baum, *The Purple Dragon and Other Fantasies*, p. 18]

These dragons are amusing, and their evil deeds are amusing. It is hardly a surprise when children succeed in taming one, by a mixture of kindness and deceit, and it turns into a real pussycat (Nesbit's "The Dragon Tamers"). Because these dragons are funny, they are likeable, in almost the same way that the Reluctant Dragon is, even though they do not share the Reluctant Dragon's sweetness of temper. A small horde of comic and frequently amiable dragons followed in the early twentieth century. Baum and his successor, Ruth Plumly Thompson, put several more in various Oz books, and Baum's son, Frank J.

Baum, wrote *The Laughing Dragon of Oz*. Some other examples of comic dragons appear in Lord Dunsany's "Miss Cubbidge and the Dragon of Romance," in *The Book of Wonder*, the dragon tamed in Lady Gregory's play *The Dragon*, A. A. Milne's "Us Two" and "Knight-in-Armour," in *Now We Are Six*, and P. L. Travers tamed Draco in *Mary Poppins Comes Back*. Unusual examples of serious and virtuous dragons can be found in Kenneth Morris' *The Book of Three Dragons*, based on the *Mabinogion*, which used the patriotic British dragon as one of the shapes of the gods.

With the appearance on these comic dragons, the dragon lost its conventional stereotyped identification as a Satanic figure. Though there might have been some danger of replacing that stereotype with an equally limited one, of the dragon as merely cute, happily J. R. R. Tolkien restored the potential for serious evil to dragons in *The Hobbit* (1937). He had always "desired dragons with a profound desire,"

[side-note: J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-stories," in *Tree and Leaf*, p. 400]

and the dragons he desired were dangerous ones: "Of course, I in my timid body did not wish to have them in the neighbourhood.

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… But the world that contained even the imagination of Fafnir was richer and more beautiful at whatever cost of peril." There are humorous elements in Tolkien's portrayal of Smaug, but Smaug is not an amusing dragon, on the whole. He is not a pleasant individual and could not possibly be turned into a cat. Both the unheroic protagonist, Bilbo Baggins, and the heroic minor character, Bard of Esgaroth, are needed to bring Smaug down. In the process, Bilbo develops some heroic qualities himself: "'Confound you, Smaug, you worm!' he squeaked aloud. 'Stop playing hide-and-seek. Give me a light, and then eat me, if you catch me!'"

[side-note: J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*, p. 247]

This brave challenge is ignored. The testing of Bilbo's hard-earned bravery is against human (or humanoid) greed and wrath. Like the Victorians, Tolkien avoided absolutely evil dragons; his Satan-figures are humanoid, such as Sauron in *The Lord of the Rings*, or Morgoth in *The Silmarillion*. Glaurung, the dragon of *The Silmarillion*, is entirely evil, but he is only one of the creatures of Morgoth. Tolkien created other kinds of dragons as well, for example, the pitiable dragon, destroyed like Elves, Dwarves, and Men by the desire for gold, in "The Hoard" (in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil and other verses from The Red Book*), and a comic tameable dragon of his own, Chrysophylax, in *Farmer Giles of Ham*.

After Smaug came a large horde of dragons of all sizes, tempers, and degrees of virtue. Ursula K. Le Guin in her Earthsea books and John Gardner in *Grendel* made use of deliberate ambivalence in the creation of amoral dragons, not in themselves wicked, but irrelevant to or contemptuous of human morality; they seem to represent Nature as seen from the view Grahame chose not to use, the Nature of the Wild Wood. (5) Against this amoral beauty, the concerns of human good and evil seem terrifyingly small. Gardner's Grendel and Le Guin's Ged both struggle to define what they mean by goodness and why it matters to human societies when the category is meaningless among animals. The beauty of nature and of dragons teases them out of the rigidity of judging simply by morality and into a wider sympathy with the world about them, even though it cannot be fitted readily into human categories. Grendel the monster is destroyed by his struggle to be aware of both human and nonhuman; Ged finds a balance. Both, however, learn much from the traditionally perilous wisdom of dragons.

Other examples of modern science fiction or fantasy writers who have portrayed notable book-length dragons include Anne McCaffrey (the Dragons of Pern ridden as battle steeds in *Dragonflight* and

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its sequels), James Blish (the draconoid aliens of *A Case of Conscience*), Ruth Stiles Gannet (*My Father's Dragon* and the sequels), C. S. Forester (*Poo-Poo and the Dragons*), Andre Norton (*Dragon Magic*), Gordon Dickson (*The Dragon and the George*), Eleanor Arnason (the smithing dragons of *the Swordsmith*), and Avram Davidson (Smarasderagd in *Peregrine: Secundus*). Dragons even serve as a short-hand symbol for all fantasy beings in the title of one of Le Guin's essays, "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" (in *The Language of the Night, Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction*) and in the name of a popular game, Dungeons and Dragons. The brood of the Reluctant Dragon, in the glory of their ambiguity, have repopulated the world of the imagination.

Notes

(1) The guardian dragon, although very rare in Victorian prose, appears occasionally in Victorian poetry, as for example in Tennyson's "The Hesperides" and William Morris' "The golden Apples" in *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-1870). Morris retained the dragon guarding the fleece in *The Life and Death of Jason (1889*); he omitted Medea's dragon chariot, but he added some dragons not called for by his sources, a swarm of marsh dragons north of Colchis, and a glimpse of the dragon of the Hesperides. He also had a dragon-woman in "The Lady of the Land: in *The Earthly Paradise*, and he included the gold-hoarding Fafner both in his prose translation of *The Volsunga Saga* (1888), and in his poem, *Sigurd the Volsung*. Despite his fondness for these dragons of myth, when he invented his own plots, as he did in his prose fantasy tales, Morris preferred human magic – witches, sorcerers, sorceresses, and the like.

(2) In addition to "The Griffin and the Minor Canon" in *The Bee-Man of Orn and Other Fanciful Tales* (1887), Stockton had two other griffins, one in the title story and one in "The Philopena." He also made use of a Sphinx as a leading character in "The Banished King," but the only dragon in the collection appears as a minor character in "The Bee-Man of Orn."

(3) Nesbit's *The Book of Dragons* (1900) is made up of unrelated short stories about dragons, collected from *The Strand Magazine*. Baum's *A New Wonderland* is a series of episodes set in Phunnyland, with the Purple Dragon as villain in the opening and closing chapters (the book is better known as *The Magical Monarch of Mo*, the title and place-name given it in the rewritten version of 1903). Other writers of children's stories, less famous than Grahame, Nesbit, and Baum, were also writing about comic dragons at the end of the century and playing on the joke of the nonheroic methods used to overcome them. Thus, in Britain, Isabel Bellarby's "Princess Crystal" appeared in *The Strand* (no. 11, 1896). This was one of a series of fairy tales illustrated by H. R. Millar, E. Nesbit's illustrator. Most of the others in this series were folktales, retold with no byline. In America, *St. Nicholas* published two stories by Tudor Jenks, "Papa Dragon's Tale" (no. 22, July 1895) "The Dragon and the Dragoon" (no. 27, April 1900); and one by Alice Calhoun Haines, "A Tender-Hearted Mon- [p. 232] ster" (no. 24, January 1897). These stories are pleasant, but their dragons lean too much towards being cute and funny and lack the potentially dangerous strength of the dragons of Grahame, Nesbit, and Baum.

(4) Nesbit made heraldry a source of magic in *The House of Arden* and *Harding's Luck*, and her polychromatic dragons may have been influenced by her knowledge of heraldry. Baum's books do not show an interest in heraldry, but he delighted in the use of bright colors, as may be seen, for example, in the geography of Oz, or in the character of Polychrome, the Rainbow's daughter.

(5) In *The Beginning Place*, Le Guin has made yet another use of the dragon, turning the combat of hero and dragon from a moral struggle to a Jungian maturation episode for the hero, who thereby

masters and assimilates the destructive power of the unconscious. For an illuminating discussion of Jungian dragons, see Joseph L. Henderson, "ancient Myths and Modern Man," in *Man and His Symbols*, ed. Carl G. Jung and M. L. von Franz, eds. (1964; reprint by Dell, 1968), pp. 112-119.

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